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Asia Pacific Business Outlook (APBO)

Do not miss the premier event to explore business opportunities in Asia!

APBO, hosted by the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, with the full support of the U.S. Commercial Service, is the longest running, most successful regional conference of its kind focusing specifically on Asian markets. This conference has made a difference for U.S. exporters, and has become the premier U.S. commercial trade event focusing on the Asia Pacific region.

APBO 2006 brings the experts closer to you with 14 Senior Commercial Officers from American embassies, consulates and institutes in the following economies: **Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.** They will speak in small-group workshops and be available for private one-on-one consultations with pre-registered APBO participants.

For more information on the conference or to register to attend, go to the following site:

<http://www.apbo2006.com>.

******PLEASE NOTE: Use registration code DOC2006 during sign-up and mention Amy Benson at the Boise Export Assistance Center. After the registration process is complete, you will receive instructions to sign up for one-on-one meetings with Senior Commercial Officers. Each meeting**

will be approximately 15 minutes long and will take place simultaneously with the conference.***

For questions or general inquiries, contact Amy Benson, U.S. Commercial Service Asia/Pacific Team Leader, at 208-364-7791.

"Open The Banks" Conference in New Orleans

The U.S. Department of Commerce and the World Trade Center of New Orleans is proud to announce the **"Open the Banks"** conference in **New Orleans, March 30, 2006**.

This one day event is an incredible opportunity for U.S. companies to create business relationships with the five major multilateral development banks. The conference will highlight the activities of the **World Bank; European Bank for Reconstruction & Development; Asian Development Bank; African Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank**.

In addition to the opportunity for networking with the development banks, the conference will also include moderated discussion with Senior Commercial Officers of the banks, perspectives from the U.S. Executive Directors, informational training sessions, and finally closing with a Jazz Reception.

For more information and to register for this unique event, please visit

<http://www.wtcno.org/programs/2006/banks3-30.htm>

or

contact Amy Benson at the Boise Export Assistance Center.

Environmental Technologies Trade Mission to Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines

The Commercial Service will lead an **Environmental Technologies Trade Mission to Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines, April 24-May 3, 2006**. This event offers a timely way for you to meet valuable business contacts, make new contacts, increase your firm's exposure, and to learn first-hand about the latest developments in the market.

As a participant, you'll receive:

- One-on-one, pre-screened business appointments in each country
- In-depth market briefings
- In Manila, an Asian Development Bank briefing on opportunities created by ADB's \$6 billion annual lending operations
- Export counseling before and after the mission
- In-country media coverage
- Logistical support, including interpreter services
- Networking hospitality events

Don't wait! Space is limited to the first 10 qualified U.S. companies. Our matchmaking service can help you make the connections you need to find business partners in Southeast Asia and boost your international sales.

For more information contact Amy Benson at the Boise Export Assistance Center.

Secretary Gutierrez Trip to the Middle East and Bahrain Conference

Are you targeting the Middle East? If you are, the US Commercial Service is inviting you to a free conference and luncheon in Bahrain with Secretary Gutierrez.

U.S. Commerce Secretary Gutierrez is planning a trip to **Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt February 23 to March 3**. The main event will take place at a **free trade conference and luncheon in Bahrain**, hosted by the government of Bahrain, through its Economic Development Board, and private sector support will be provided by the Business Council for International Understanding (BCIU) and the National Foreign Trade Council under their umbrella organization the U.S.-Middle East Free Trade (US-MEFTA) Coalition. On February 27th Secretary Gutierrez will participate in a conference to highlight the recently - ratified US-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement. The focus of the trip and conference will be to connect US companies to companies in the region, encouraging liberalization with a bilateral push for business success through trade. A second added benefit to this conference is the advantage that participant companies will receive as they get in on the ground floor of a region that is now open and ready for foreign trade. Along with the unique network building opportunities, this event also offers a wide variety of special sessions. The Crown Prince of Bahrain is expected to kick off the event with welcoming remarks, providing valuable information based on knowledge and active engagement in the economic and commercial sphere of his country. Having the Crown Prince in attendance is expected to attract a wide variety of high-level Bahrainis. There will also be a series of panel presentations during the conference featuring government officials and executives discussing the FTA process and future expectations, as well as focusing on specific industries that will benefit the most from the FTA. The half-day conference will be closed with a luncheon and keynote address by Secretary Gutierrez.

If you have any further questions, will be in the region, or would like to take advantage of this free and unique business opportunity, contact Amy Benson at the Boise Export Assistance Center.

Automotive "Z-Show" in Leipzig, Germany

The US Commercial Service in Germany is making it easy for companies to participate in this year's annual **"Z-Show"** ("Zuliefermesse," or suppliers fair), which takes place **June 20-23, in Leipzig, Germany**. If you supply OE automotive components, modules and technologies, and are interested in expanding your business into important European markets, this is the perfect opportunity for your company. Located on "Motor Alley," Leipzig is close to the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary where international automotive manufacturers have invested in modern facilities and skilled employees working for competitive wages. As a result, the Z-Show draws qualified engineers and buyers from Europe and beyond.

At this year's show there are two unique opportunities available. As always, it is encouraged that all American exporters directly exhibit at the Z-Show to gain visibility and contacts. Of course, if you do not wish to have an exhibit the U.S. Commercial Service is offering a low-cost alternative for participation.

The second option includes the following:

- A table/counter top with seating in the USA Pavilion for you, with room for product sample(s).
- A literature rack to exhibit catalogs/samples.
- Support from CS Automotive Specialists to help with counseling and translations.
- The Z-Show's "Buyers Days" program of pre-arranged meetings with Tier 1 suppliers is included at no extra cost.
- Commercial Service Auto Specialists in neighboring countries will promote your presence to buyers in their countries before the show.
- After-show support, from our U.S. and European Commercial Service Automotive Teams.
- Your literature will also be shown at an **Audi in-house event on July 7, 2006**.

All of the incredible opportunities mentioned above are available for the low-cost of \$1,450.

For complete program details, including conditions of participation, and to register your interest with us online, please visit http://www.buyusa.gov/germany/en/z_show.html, or simply contact Paul Warren-Smith at paul.warren-smith@mail.doc.gov.

You can also contact Amy Benson at the Idaho Export Assistance Office, 208-364-7791.

RoHS and WEEE Implementation

Learn the latest global developments from AeA - the only association lobbying on IT environment issues at state, federal and international issues.

The RoHS Implementation is only weeks away and WEEE Implementation is continuously evolving...Is your company ready? If not the 2006 AEA International Environment Programs will provide an update of the European Union's WEEE and RoHS requirements to help your company.

This program is designed to enable your managers, compliance executives, legal departments and environmental and facilities professionals to better understand and comply with these Directives, as well as to determine how your company can best position itself in today's changing global marketplace. To maximize your company's understanding of this important issue, we encourage you to bring your business and channel partners with you. Working together on these new requirements is essential to your company's success.

Besides hearing the latest domestic and international "RoHS" and "WEEE" information, other resources will be available to keep you up to date and informed. Leading companies will be available to help you by describing how they are preparing to comply with the updates. Also, a wide variety of legal analysis from the leading WEEE/RoHS legal resources will be available, including:

Ken Rivlin, Partner and Jean-Philippe Brisson, Senior Counsel Allen & Overy, LLP.

Receive RoHS information from the UK's TAC member -

Steve Andrews, UK Department of Trade & Industry.

Check the following list of dates and locations to find the best event for your company!!!

- Thursday, March 2nd Sunnyvale, California, **Host Facility:** Advanced Micro Devices (AMD)
- Monday, March 6th Seattle, Washington, **Host Facility:** Microsoft Corporation
- Thursday, March 9th Andover, Massachusetts, **Host Facility:** Philips Medical Systems
- Tuesday, April 4th Chicago, Illinois, **Host Facility:** Motorola
- Thursday, April 6th Denver, Colorado, **Host Facility:** Sun Microsystems Data Management Group (StorageTek) campus

For more information please contact Amy Benson at the Boise Export Assistance Center.

Doing Business in the Middle East and North Africa

The countries that make up the Middle East and North Africa have a combined population of more than 320 million and form an area of tremendous strategic and economic importance to the United States. Although doing businesses in the Middle East can present some unique challenges many U.S. companies have found a high source of demand for their goods and services in the region. The U.S. free trade agreements (FTAs) with Israel and Jordan have further opened the way for American companies seeking to trade with Middle Eastern partners. In addition, the United States is promoting free trade agreements with other states in the region including Morocco, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates. When doing business in the Middle East, American businesses benefit greatly from basic knowledge of conditions in and customs of Middle Eastern and North African countries.

Can U.S. companies trade with the Middle East and North Africa?

Given the current uncertainty about U.S. relations with some countries in the Middle East and North Africa, business may wonder whether there is a market for their goods in the region. In fact, exports from the U.S. have become a part of daily life in the Middle East and North Africa. During 2004, American Businesses exported goods and services valued at more than \$23.5 billion to the region, with Saudi Arabia and Israel serving consistently as the largest Middle Eastern buyers of American goods.

There are, however, countries in the Middle East and North Africa which the United States maintains comprehensive trade sanctions. American companies are generally prohibited from trading with Iran and Sudan. There are limited exceptions to these sanctions, primarily involving the export of food, medicine and medical supplies, as well as trade in informational materials. And although restrictions have been lessened in other countries (such as Iraq or Libya), there are important restrictions U.S. exporters need to know. To learn more about U.S. sanctions, please contact the **U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control at 1-800-540-6322** or visit its website at <http://www.treas.gov/ofac>.

In addition to the countries mentioned above, there are four lists of entities and individuals with whom U.S. persons are not allowed to do business. These lists include individuals, groups, and entities such as terrorists and narcotics traffickers designated under programs that are not country-specific. Many of these parties are located in the Middle East and North Africa, but not necessarily in sanctioned countries. American companies are obligated to conduct due diligence to ensure that they comply with all U.S. regulations, including country embargos, license requirement, and prohibited party bans. **For more information about these lists and other export controls, see the TIC article for Export America titled Export Controls at <http://www.trade.gov/td/tic/>.**

Some products may require licenses, particularly in situations involving national security, foreign policy, short-supply, nuclear non-proliferation, missile technology, chemical and biological weapons, regional stability, crime control, or terrorist concerns. The Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) has primary responsibility for the licensing of dual-use goods, i.e., items with both

commercial and military/strategic implications, while the States Department's Office of Defense Trade Controls (DTC) deals with defense articles, services, and related technology. Several other agencies issue licenses for particular goods. **For a brief description of each agency's responsibilities and their contact information, visit <http://www.bis.gov/About?reslinks.htm>. Contact BIS at 202-482-4811 or DTC at 703-875-6644 for more details.**

U.S. businesses are reminded to comply with U.S. laws and regulations prohibiting actions supporting the Arab boycott against Israel. **For questions concerning U.S. antiboycott regulations, contact the Office of Antiboycott Compliance at 202-482-2381.**

Are There Special Documents Required to export to countries in the Middle East and North Africa?

The documentary requirements for exports to the Middle East and North Africa vary by country. Arab countries require that commercial invoices be certified either by the **National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce** (<http://www.arachamber.org/uae/index.htm>, tel: 202-289-5920) or, in the case of the **United Arab Emirates**, by the **Arab American Chamber of Commerce** (<http://www.arachamber.org/uae/index.htm>) and legalized by each respective country's consulate. A list of foreign embassies and consulates in the United States is available on the Trade Information Center's website at <http://www.export.gov/tic>. Choose the link titled "Trade Office Nationwide."

In order to take advantage of the free trade agreements with Israel and Jordan, a unique certificate of origin must be completed. For goods to meet FTA standards, they must have been made entirely in the United States and any third-country materials must have undergone a "substantial transformation" in the manufacturing process. In addition, at least 35% of the customs value of the product must be attributed to U.S. origin materials. Finally, the good must be shipped directly from the United States to its partner country. The certificate of origin for Israel can be obtained from an America-Israel Chamber of Commerce (<http://www.americaisrael.org/>). The certificate of origin for Jordan must be notarized, typically by the chamber of commerce in the exporter's area. **To learn more about these certificates of origin or about the specific documents required for each Middle Eastern country, call the Trade Information Center at 1-800-USA-TRADE.**

Finally, some Middle Eastern and North African countries require that documents used in international transactions be authenticated. This service is provided by the Department of State's Office of Authentication (<http://www.state.gov/m/a/auth/>).

Are there any special concerns I should keep in mind when marketing my product in the Middle East and North Africa?

When marketing products overseas, regardless of the location, businesses should keep their target audience in mind and be sensitive to local conditions. While the countries of the Middle East and North Africa are not a monolith, there are, of course, significant differences between countries. Suggestive advertisements may be deemed offensive in Islamic countries given their more traditional standards of dress and behavior, particularly for women. Advertisements featuring alcohol or pork products are also likely to be poorly received. Use of Arabic and Hebrew Script should be done carefully to avoid situations like that which befell a company that printed an Arabic phrase on bath towels, not realizing that the phrase had religious connotations.

More information about markets in each Middle Eastern and North African country can be found on the Trade Information Center website at <http://www.export.gov/tic> under the "Country Information" link.

How can I learn about travel advisories for a country before I visit for business?

The U.S. Department of State maintains information about country conditions around the world. For information concerning travel advisories, medical facilities, traffic safety/road conditions, crime, and other related issues, as well as entry requirements and visa information, please see the **Consular Information Sheet for individual countries online at <http://www.travel.state.gov> or by autofax at 202-647-3000.**

What customs should I be aware of when I travel to the region for business?

A basic knowledge of general Middle Eastern and North African customs can increase the likelihood of successful business negotiations and help avoid misunderstandings. The following is a brief list of some common customs that may make your meetings with a Middle Eastern partner more productive.

Greetings and Hospitality

Handshakes are a typical greeting in the Middle East and North Africa and are not only used during the first introduction, but may be used each time two people meet, even numerous times in a single day. For example, the common practice in Saudi Arabia is to shake hands at first meeting and again upon leaving. Typically, people throughout the Middle East and North Africa maintain closer physical proximity while talking, and conversations often involve more physical contact than is common in the United States. Backing up to increase personal space may feel natural to an American, but will likely be seen as impolite or rude by an Arab or Israeli partner. However, when speaking with a person of the opposite sex, a respectful distance is best. Also, avoid sitting or crossing your legs in such a way that the bottom of your foot faces anyone. This is considered rude.

Middle Eastern and North African hosts tend to be very hospitable and regard treating guests with generosity and warmth as a point of personal honor. In Arab countries, lengthy small talk and ritualized

greetings serve an important function, establishing friendly relations at the beginning of a meeting. Tea or coffee is typically offered by the host and should be accepted by the guest; to reject the offer may be seen as an affront.

When a guest in an Arab person's home, avoid giving gifts of food or drink. Though this may be common practice in the United States, in the Middle East and North Africa such gifts imply that the host is inadequate. Gifts of liquor should definitely be avoided in Islamic countries because alcohol is prohibited by the Muslim faith. In Israel, gifts of food or drink are acceptable, but one should ensure that the items are kosher, particularly in the case of Orthodox Jews.

Punctuality and Scheduling

Punctuality is not rigidly observed in many Middle Eastern and North African countries. However, though Middle Eastern and North African associated may be late, foreigners are expected to be punctual. Businesspeople should avoid the appearance of being in a hurry or impatient. Checking one's watch in a meeting can be deemed offensive.

Business hours differ from country to country and, in some cases, from city to city. You can find more information about business hours around the Middle East and North Africa in the Country Commercial Guide for each country. **You can access these sources of market research prepared by U.S.**

Commercial Service staff abroad online at <http://www.export.gov>. Choose "Country and Industry Market Research" from the menu on the left side of the page and follow the prompts for "Country Commercial Guide."

Language

Though English is widely spoke in the business community, it is wise to have business cards printed in English and in Arabic, or in the case of Israel in English and Hebrew.

Where can I find out about business holidays?

Information about business holidays can be found on the Trade Information Center website at <http://www.export.gov/tic>. Select "Country Information" and then choose "Business Holidays" from the list on the left. Business travel to Israel during the ten-day period between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is best avoided. These are the "High Holidays," the most important Jewish holidays, typically falling with the month of September. Travel to Muslim countries during the holy month of Ramadan may also pose a unique challenge. Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar (typically beginning in November), is believed to be the time when the Koran, Islam's most sacred text, was sent down from heaven. To observe this holiday, Muslims fast for a full month, refraining from eating and drinking from sunrise to sunset every day, and focusing on contemplation and worship. Office hours are typically shortened and shifted to the evening, and people may be affected by the fasting and customary late night social gatherings.

For more information about any of the topics addressed in this article or other export-related questions, please contact Amy Benson at the Boise Export Assistance Center.

Market of the Month: Malaysia

Malaysia has often been called the crossroads of Asian trade because of its strategic location between East and West. Its peninsula stretches through the Strait of Malacca, one of the most economically important shipping lanes in the world. Since the 1970s Malaysia has been able to rejuvenate its economy from an agriculture and mining base to competitive high-tech nation. With a strong middle class and a one of the highest purchasing powers in Asia, Malaysia has proven to be a powerful purchaser of U.S. branded products, with the U.S. accounting for 70% of foreign franchises. This trade is only expected to grow in the wake of the U.S. and Malaysia signing the Trade and Investment Framework in 2004, which is only the beginning to suspected negotiations for a bilateral free trade agreement. Malaysia has experienced sustained growth over the past several years and is now one of the most important markets for U.S. companies.

Malaysia at a Glance

- **Population:** 23,953,136 (2005)
- **Capital:** Kuala Lumpur
- **GDP (ppp):** \$248 billion (2005)
- **GDP real growth rate:** 5.1% (2005)
- **Top Import Partners:** Japan, U.S., Singapore, China, Thailand and Taiwan

Best U.S. Export Prospects

- Oil & Gas equipment and services
- Healthcare medical devices and pharmaceutical products

- Education
- Environmental pollution and waste management equipment

For more information please contact Amy Benson at the Boise Export Assistance Center.